



Indiana State Department of Health
Breast and Cervical Cancer Program
Just the Fax----14 September 2001



Nipple Discharge....What's suspicious?....What's not?

Discharge suggestive of neoplasm/malignancy:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| *spontaneous | *bloody |
| *unilateral | *serous |
| *confined to single duct | *serosanguinous |
| *clear | |

FOR ANY OF THE ABOVE SYMPTOMS, DIAGNOSTIC MAMMOGRAPHY AND SURGICAL CONSULT IS WARRANTED AND IS COVERED BY BCCP.

Discharge NOT suspicious for neoplasm/malignancy:

- | | |
|--------------|----------------------------|
| *bilateral | *milky |
| *multiductal | *green-gray or black color |

ANY OF THE ABOVE ARE NOT SUGGESTIVE OF CANCER AND DO NOT WARRANT EVALUATION FOR BREAST CANCER; HOWEVER, THE PROVIDER MAY CHOOSE TO EVALUATE THE PATIENT FOR PITUITARY AND/OR ENDOCRINE DYSFUNCTION. THESE SERVICES ARE NOT COVERED BY BCCP.

THE ONLY EXCEPTION:

ANY DISCHARGE FROM EITHER LIST ABOVE FOUND IN A PATIENT WITH A PALPABLE MASS REGARDLESS OF HER AGE WARRANTS DIAGNOSTIC MAMMOGRAPHY AND SURGICAL CONSULT AND IS COVERED BY BCCP.

Treatment Considerations:

- Diagnostic mammography has a low yield of specific diagnosis for suspicious discharge unless it is accompanied by a surgical consult.
- Cytologic analysis of nipple discharge is rarely useful or cost effective. (PAP SMEAR of the discharge)
- If the discharge is unilateral, it is likely due to an anatomic problem, not hormonal or endocrine dysfunction and hormonal evaluation is unlikely to be helpful.

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Case examples of services provided by BCCP:

--Woman, age 62, presents with bilateral green discharge, CBE is normal, last mammogram 2 years ago—a **SCREENING** mammogram is ordered based on patient's age and last screen. It will be covered by BCCP under regular protocols---the nipple discharge is not pertinent to BCCP protocols in this case.

--Woman, age 42, bloody discharge from left breast, occurs spontaneously each morning after she showers, CBE is normal except for the discharge which is noted by the provider, Diagnostic Mammogram is ordered and surgical consult to follow despite woman's age this would be covered by BCCP.

--Woman, age 38, milky discharge from left breast, last pregnancy 3 years ago, patient feels small nodule behind left nipple, CBE per provider is "discrete palpable abnormality", despite age, patient referred for diagnostic mammogram and surgical consult per BCCP on the basis of abnormal CBE combined with discharge (although the discharge would not typically be alarming without the palpable mass)

Any questions? Please contact Carla Jackson @812-428-2167